

An Essay  
on  
Dysentery  
Respectfully Submitted  
to the  
Faculty  
of the  
Homoeopathic Medical College  
of  
Pennsylvania  
On the first day of February  
One thousand Eight hundred and  
Sixty six  
By  
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of  
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In writing upon the subject of  
Dysentery I am aware that I have  
chosen a subject that abler minds  
have exhausted yet I think there  
is no disease which gives more trouble  
to the young practitioner both in  
the adult and infant patient  
than Dysentery, there is no dis-  
ease which we are liable to con-  
found with it, all its symptoms  
are characteristic and prominent.  
Dysentery is essentially a disease  
of Summer and Autumn and  
may be divided into two forms  
the acute and chronic its  
causes are numerous.  
We will first consider the acute  
form which is always characterized  
by there being more or less pain  
always present in the bowels



generally in some part of the colon which is tender on pressure over the affected part;

The pains are characterized by their intermittent, shifting, and sharp shooting nature; and is often accompanied by a disagreeable desire to go to stool, yet the frequent attempt to evacuate the bowels and the violent straining of the patient only adds to their discomfort.

There is but little faecal matter in the discharges which are generally very small in quantity and consist of blood mixed with pus corpuscles exudations granules and globules and large quantities, it contains small lumps of faecal matter, and the stool resembles the



washings of meats or jelly like  
or like chopped spinnage or like the  
scraping of intestines, in its earlier  
stages we generally find that it is  
ushered in by a chill and frequently  
preceded by vomiting or Diarrhea  
it is always accompanied by fever  
of a mild type, in ordinary cases  
the pulse is but little excited and  
the skin remains cool,

In the more severe cases however  
we frequently find, especially in ~~Infants~~  
some symptoms which would lead  
us to expect disease of the brain  
such as boring the head in the  
pillow frequent spasms drawing  
the little patient almost double,  
with short quick or a continual  
moaning with great thirst and loss  
of appetite cold sweat of face



And very frequent discharges, sometimes amounting to Thirty or Forty in twenty four hours,

The causes are eating green fruit exposure to cold air after being heated Sleeping on the ground Malarial fevers, Diarrhoea purgatives, or it may be induced by bathing in cold water on a warm day.

Its course is generally rapid and will terminate favourably if properly treated, <sup>within a week</sup> but in the more severe cases it runs a much shorter course and hastens on to complete prostration and death.

We most often find such cases in the frightful epidemics which sometimes occur in our large Cities



We will now consider the chronic form, in the Diagnosis of Chronic Dysentery we find it extremely difficult to distinguish it from Chronic Diarrhea here as in the acute form we find the discharge mixed with blood and the same straining and bearing down which are the characteristics symptoms of Dysentery there is more feces of the fluid nature than in the acute form and for this reason it is very difficult to distinguish from Chronic Diarrhea unless we can clearly perceive the presence of pus in the discharge. there is no pain on pressure and frequently we find the abdomen bloated and tympanitic the patient goes on losing flesh and becoming very much prostrated.



The prognosis is not very favourable  
it frequently terminates in abscesses  
on the liver, or the patient dies  
from exhaustion frequently it runs  
on and leaves the patient in a  
Typhoid state,

Upon postmortem examination  
we find the mucous membrane  
very much thickened and denuded  
of its epithelium and ulcerated  
in fact perfectly riddled with  
ulcers, and frequently the whole  
course of the intestines is to be in  
a state of inflammation

I have endeavoured to give a clear outline  
of Dysentery as described by many writers  
which in the main I believe to be correct  
with the exception of the prognosis  
which under Homoeopathic treatment  
I claim to be much more favourable.



## Treatment

In the treatment of Chronic Dysentery the diet is of the greatest importance gruel, arrowroot, and all other light farinaceous food should be allowed, Next in importance is the hygienic measures, attention to clothing and general cleanliness. and allowing the patient pure fresh air the patient should be kept quiet to facilitate a speedy cure.

We will now consider the remedies most likely to be applicable to the disease

Acon, Apis, Ars, Alum, Bell, Big. Root.  
Caps, Carbo. v. Colch, Coloc, Hep.  
Ipec, Merc. b, Merc. s. b, Nux. v. Puls,  
Rhus. v. Staph, Sulph. & Verat. are the principal remedies.



### *Aconite, nap*

When the skin is dry and burning preceded by a chill, anguish thinks he can't get well and every movement causes a desire to go to stool, the abdomen is somewhat bloated with sensitiveness to touch, stool frequent mixed with mucous and blood.

### *Apis m*

Violent tenesmus with violent nausea and vomiting stool <sup>first</sup> lumpy and not fetid afterwards watery and fetid. Lastly purulent mixed with blood and mucous with tenesmus and sensation as if the bowels were crushed worse in the morning.

### *Arsenicum, s*

Pains of a burning nature great prostration dry parched skin or dry parchment like skin or blue and cold



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great calaness with loss of pulse and clammy sweat, sweat at the commencement of sleep drinks frequently and but little at a time constant nausea and vomiting slimy green or yellowish Undigested stool especialy after drinking cold water, stool of blood with burning and prolapsus of the rectum.

Hum. when there is a constant desire to urinate but unsuccessfull except when the feces are passing,  
Belladonna.

Boring the head in the pillow, raging mania dry mouth without thirst bright red tongue or only red on the borders with white middle or brown tongue. stool mixed with mucous stool yellow whitish or green



Argentum. m.  
When the stool is greenish very fetid  
mucous, ulceration of the intestines  
with involuntary discharge of feces  
pain in the small of the back.

Cantharides.  
When the stool looks like the scrapings  
of intestines mixed with blood,  
abdomen sensitive to touch cutting  
and boring in the anus with  
constant desire to urinate and  
retention of urine,

Carbo m.  
Feet bruised all over Typhoid state  
of the patient swelling and induration  
of the abdomen smarting in the  
rectum discharge acrid corrosive  
humor from the rectum discharge  
of pure blood from the rectum  
involuntary discharge of putrid cadaverous stool.



## Colchicum.

Worse from mental exertion inclination to vomit when swallowing the saliva every motion excites vomiting. distention of the abdomen Dysentery with discharge of white mucous and violent tenesmus.

## Colocynthis.

While lying still he feels the beating of the arteries over the whole body frequent vomiting sometimes of greenish substances pain in the abdomen causing him to bend forward with much flatulency, pain as if the bowels were squeezed between two stones the bowels feel sore the pain almost disappears during stool but soon returns; liquid frothy stool smelling like burned paper.



## Ipecac.

Cold sweat on hands and feet  
constant nausea and vomiting,  
vomiting large quantities of green jelly  
like mucous or black and pick like  
grass green stool or fermented fetid stool,  
stool covered with bloody mucous  
constant pain around the umbilicus.

## Mercurius B.

Fetid smell from the mouth with  
salivation coated tongue much thirst  
constant desire for stool without  
being able to accomplish anything  
stool covered with mucous and black  
frothy or green stool corroding the  
anus burning the parts; stool small  
and sour.

## Nux. B.

White tongue putrid taste lay down  
in the pharynx pain in the stomach



as that of a stone burning in the  
 pit of the stomach, cholice succeeded  
 by dark colored faeces causing burning  
 in the anus small stool mostly  
 of mucus, discharge of blood with  
 sensation of constriction of the anus.  
 Thus. 1.

Dry red or brown tongue. red and  
 yellow stool mixed with mucus  
 especially suitable in Typhoid condition  
 involuntary stool. the patient worse  
 at rest a while lying down at night.

We find many other very important  
 remedies such as, Aloe. Trombidium, m. s.

It becomes the duty of the Physician  
 to select the remedies according to the  
 characteristic symptoms present.